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Message Text

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21
ACTION OES-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 FEA-01 AEC-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-01

INR-07 INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 RSC-01

SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 STR-01 TRSE-00 FRB-01 PA-01 PRS-01

USIA-06 DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00 COA-01 DLOS-03 IO-10

/100 W
---------- 116494
R 100800Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6044
INFO AMMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 3210
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR PLOS EWWT SENV EFIS ID JA SN MY
SUBJ: GROUNDING OF JAPANESE TANKER IN MALACCA STRATIS STIRS PROTEST

REF: TOKYO 224

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

SUMMARY: GOI SPOKESMEN AND PRESS AR CITING GROUNDING OF 237,698 TON JAPANESE TANKER "SHOWA MARU" IN MALACCA STRAITS JANUARY 6 WITH SERIOUS RESULTING OIL SPILLS AS PROOF THAT INDONESIA MUST VINDICATE TERRITORIAL STATUS
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OF STRAITS AN ENFORCE 200,000 TON LIMIT ON TRANSITING

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SHIPS. ALTHOUGH NO DAMAGE TO INDONESIAN COAST YET
REPORTED, GOI SAYS IT WILL SEEK COMPENSATION FROM JAPANESE
WITH SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA, OR BY ITSELF. MEANWHILE,
SHOWA MARU HAS REPOERTEDLY BEEN SALVAGED AND SHIPS
FROM SINGAPORE ARE SUCCEEDING IN KEEPING LARGE
OIL SLICKS FROM SINGAPOR COAST. FOLLOWING BASED
ON LOCAL AND WIRE SERVICE PRESS REPORTS. END SUMMARY

1. SHOWA MARU RAN AGROUND ON REEF NEAR BUFFALO ROCK
IN INDONESAN WATERS OF TRAITS AT 5:30 MONDAY,
JANUARY 6. LOCATION 01 DEGREES 9 MINUTES 24 SECONDS
N, 103,44. 0.6 E) THREE OF SHIPS TWELVE TANKS
RUPTURED, SPILLING ESTIMATED 3,600 TONS OF OIL
WHICH IS DRIFING NEAR SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA
SHORES, SALVAGE SHIPS HAVE REPORTEDLY FREED SHOWA
MARU BY TRANSFERRING OIL, AND ANTI-POLLUTION ARMANDA
OF 32 SINGAPORE VESSELS ARE SUCCEEDING IN
DISPERSING OIL WITH CHEMICALS BEFORE IT REACHES
NEARBY RESORT ISLAND OF SENTOSA AND SINGAPORE
HARBOR. MALAYSIAN SHIPSMAKING SIMILAR EFFORT OFF
JOHORE COAST. NO DAMAGE TO INDONESIAN SHORELINE YET
ASCERTAINED. JAPAN REPORTEDLY HAS OFFERED TO PAY CLEANUP COSTS.

2. PRESIDENT SUHARTO ON WEDNESDAY ORDERED IMMEDIATE
MEASURES TO SURVEY ACCIDENT AND MINIMIZE DAMAGE
TO INDONESIAN COASTS AND INHABITANTS. HE SAID
INCIDENT REEMPHASIZED INDONESIA'S INTEREST IN JOINT
REGULATION OF STRAITS. MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS
AND TRANSPORT SALIM, AFTER MEETING WITH SUHARTO
THURSDAY, SAID GOI WOULD SEEK COMPENSATION FROM
JAPANESE FOR ANY DAMAGE, TOGETHER WITH SINGAPORE AND
MALAYSIA OR BY ITSELF. FOREIGN DEPARTMENT
ANNOUNCED THAT JAPANESE AMBASSADOR SUNOBE WOULD
BE CALLED IN SOON. MINISTER OF RESEARCH SUMITRO
SAID INCIDENT SHOULD BE A LESSON TO SINGAPORE
AND THATIT MUST COOPERATE WITH INDONESIA. IN
SINGAPORE.INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR RUKMITO CALLED
FOR TRIPARTITE MEETING BETWEEN INDONESIA,
SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA ON POLLUTION AND SAFETY
MEASURES FOR STRAITS.
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3. DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR SEA
COMMUNICATIONS ADM HARJONO NIMPUNO TOLD PRESS
SHOWA MARU ACCIDENT WAS FIRTHER PROOF THAT INDONESIA,
SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA MUST STRUGGLE TO WIN
RECOGNITION FOR TERRITORIAL SOVERIGNTY OVER
STRAITS TO PREVENT SUCH INCIDENTS IN FUTURE.
NIMPUNO SAID SHOWA MARU ACCIDENT WAS RESULT OF

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NAVIGATIONAL ERROR AND STRONG CURRENTS, SINCE RADAR REFLECTOR ON BUFFALO ROCK WAS OPERATING. HE EXPRESSED REGRET AT JAPAN'S INDIFFERENCE TO INDONESIAN POLICY THAT STRAITS NOT SAFELY NAVIGABLE BY TANKERS OF OVER 200,000 TONS CAPACAITY. NIMPUNO POINTED OUT THAT COST OF OIL SPILLS TO PEOPLE OF RIPARIAN STATES IS FAR GREATER THAN EXTRA COST OF LONGER ROUTE FROM PERSIAN GULF TO JAPAN THROUGH STRAITS OF LOMBOK (EAST OF JAVA AND BALI) AND STRAITS OF MAKASSAR(BETWEEN KALIMANTAN AND SULAWESI) (NOTE: SINCE 1972, GOI HAS CALIMED THAT STRAITS OF MALACCA ARE TOO NARROW AND SHOALY TO ACCOMODATE SHIPS-ESPECIALLY TANKERS- OF OVER 200,000 TONS, AND THAT SUCH SHIPS MUST USE THE LOMBOK/MAKASSAR ROUTE WHICH TAKES APPROXIMATELY 40 HOURS LONGER. NEVERTHELESS, EXCEPT FOR TANKERS OF OVER 300,000 TONS, MOST JAPANESE TANKERS STILL TRANSIT MALACCA STRAITS.)

4. NIMPUNO ADDED THAT MALACCA STRAITS ARE ALREADY OVERCROWDED (OVER 5000 VESSELS SIMULTANEOUSLY AT TIMES) AND THAT SAFETY HAZARDS WILL REMAIN EVEN AFTER INSTALLATION OF NEW SAFETY AND NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT (SUPPLEMENTING 14 LIGHTHOUSES AND 15 LIGHT BUOYS NOW IN USE) FOLLOWING SURVEY AND RESEARCH IN STRAITS NOW BEING CONDUCTED BY JAPANESE IN COOPERATION WITH COASTAL STATES.

5. IN RELATED STATEMENTS, CHAIRMAN OF JUDICIARY OF PARLIAMENT SAID INDONESIA MUST BE COMPENSATED FOR DAMAGE; DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF PARLIAMENT SAID INCIDENT PROVED 200,000 LIMIT MUST BE ENFORCED AND DEMONSTRATES NEED FOR MORE COOPERATION BETWEEN
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SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA IN SOLVING STRAITS PROBLEM; FISHERIES OFFICIALS DESCRIBED POSSIBLE COSTS OF OIL POLLUTION AND HEAD OF FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION DEMANDED FINES TO COMPENSATE FISHERMEN.

6. EDITORIALS IN THREE PAPERS STRESSED THAT INCIDENT STRENGTHENS INDONESIAN CLAIM THAT STRAITS ARE TERRITORIAL-NOT INTERNATIONAL-WATERS, AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT SINGAPORE WOULD ADOPT SIMILAR POSITION. LEADING SINAR HARAPAN SAID USE OF STRAITS BY JAPANESE SUPERTANKERS FOR ECONOMIC REASONS AT THE EXPENSE OF COASTAL STATES IS ANOTHER EXPAMPLE FOR FIRST PRIORITY GIVEN TO INTERESTS OF INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. END UNCLASSIFIED
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7. COMMENT: INDONESIAN EXPLORATION OF SHOWA MARU INCIDENT TO BOLSTER ITS TERRITORIAL CLAIM OVER STRAITS APPEARS TO BE MAINLY RHETORICAL AT THIS STAGE. UNLESS SINGAPORE ALTERS ITS VIEW AND ADOPTS INDONESIA/MALAYSIAN VIEW THAT STRAITS ARE TERRITORIAL, DIRECT ACTION OR SANCTIONS AGAINST JAPANESE SHIPPING IN STRAITS SEEM UNLIKELY. NEWSOM

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Draft Date: 10 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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Disposition Reason:
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